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71

6th July, 1942.

Mr. Alexander Moshesh,  
Native School,  
P.O. Griquatown,  
C.F.

Dear Sir,  
The following is the text of a letter I have received from  
the General Manager of the S.A. Railways and Harbours :-

"With further reference to your letter of the 24th April last  
and the enclosed communication from Alexander Moshesh in connection  
with certain matters relating to catering waiting room accommodation  
and sanitary services for non-Europeans at Bloemfontein Station, the  
matter has been fully investigated, and I have to state as follows:-

CATERING : The statement made by complainant that tea and coffee  
can only be obtained once a day before 8 o'clock in the morning at  
the non-European coffee-stall is not in accordance with fact in  
that tea, coffee, minerals, etc., can be obtained daily from the  
stall between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
and from the kitchen during the day, except on Sundays, when these  
beverages can be obtained from the kitchen at meal times only. In  
addition, the native stall boy attends to native trains arriving at  
Bloemfontein between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. on Mondays, with a view to  
ensuring that incoming passengers are able to obtain their require-  
ments.

The native stall is personally supervised by the Local  
Manager on Tuesdays, Thursday and Saturdays when native trains from  
the Transkei are being attended to by the stall attendants, in order  
to satisfy himself that passengers are receiving proper attention.  
In addition, the tea and coffee sold at the native stall are  
inspected by the Local Manager, who has found them to be correctly  
made and sweetened.

In the case of minerals cups are supplied on request or if  
a superior type of native is served.

In so far as the serving of meals and light refreshments  
from the kitchen, especially during meal times, is concerned, it  
would appear that the natives become impatient when they are told  
to wait until the Europeans have been served. This arrangement,  
whereby non-Europeans are served by European waitresses has on  
investigation been found to be unsatisfactory and it has, therefore,  
been decided to provide extra equipment and additional staff to  
permit of the service of refreshments direct from the native stall  
to the adjoining non-European waiting room. For this purpose the  
stallboy will be in attendance at the native stall from 6 a.m. with

P.T.O. - suitable -

suitable breaks until 9 p.m. thereby obviating the necessity for non-Europeans to obtain their supplies from the refreshment room kitchen, as hitherto. It is considered these arrangements should meet the requirements of the better class non-Europeans.

Regarding the allegations against the stallboy, who has had 16 years service, I have to state that with the exception of this, and one previous complaint against the employee concerned, when a deputation met the Local Manager, there has been no complaints against him, but he has been warned that serious action will be taken should he be similarly concerned in the future.

WAITING ROOM ACCOMMODATION

In connection with the complaint relating to waiting room accommodation for non-Europeans, it would appear that at one time it was the practice to lock the second-class non-European waiting room when passengers were not offering in order to prevent native third class passengers from making use of it, but I am assured by the System Manager, Bloemfontein, that this waiting room is now open continuously, and that arrangements have been made for native constables to exercise the necessary control, also that during winter months fires are regularly made in the native waiting rooms and that additional fuel is provided for replenishment.

SANITARY SERVICES

The lavatories for second class non-European passengers are, I am advised, situated next to the waiting room and are fitted with penny-in-the-slot locks. Provided a penny is put in the slot there should be no difficulty in obtaining access to these conveniences. Those for third class passengers are, however, not locked.

Any inconvenience which non-European passengers might have been caused at Bloemfontein station is regretted."

You will notice that several improvements have been effected and I have thanked the General Manager for the steps which he has taken I shall be glad to know if there is anything further you wish me to do.

Yours faithfully,

JDRJ/NMC.

3rd July, 1942.

The General Manager,  
General Manager's Office,  
S.A.R. & H.,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

Complaints of Non-European  
Passengers - Bloemfontein Stn.

I thank you for your letter of the 25th ultimo, No.G.2/401, and I very much appreciate the steps you have taken to examine the complaints submitted to you. I am communicating the contents of your letter to my correspondent for his information and comments. In the meantime, please accept my thanks for the action you have taken.

Yours faithfully,

JDRJ/NMG.

26 JUN. 1942

SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS.  
SUID-AFRIKAANSE SPOORWEË EN HAWENS.

All communications to be addressed  
to the  
GENERAL MANAGER.

I.T.

In your reply quote  
Haal in u antwoord aan }

G.2/401

Alle mededelings moet aan die  
HOOFBESTUURDER  
gerig word.

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE,  
HOOFBESTUURDERSKANTOOR,

JOHANNESBURG.

Telegrams/Telegramme } SAR.  
Cables/Kabelgramme }

22nd June, 1942.

Phone : Railway Exchange  
Telefoon : Spoorwegsentrale.

25-6-1942

Senator J. D. Rheinalt-Jones,  
P. O. Box 97,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

With further reference to your letter of the 24th April, last, and the enclosed communication from Alexander Moshesh in connection with certain matters relating to catering waiting room accommodation and sanitary services for non-Europeans at Bloemfontein Station, the matter has been fully investigated, and I have to state as follows:-

CATERING

The statement made by complainant that tea and coffee can only be obtained once a day before 8 o'clock in the morning at the non-European coffee-stall is not in accordance with fact in that tea, coffee, minerals, etc., can be obtained daily from the stall between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and from the kitchen during the day, except on Sundays when these beverages can be obtained from the kitchen at meal times only. In addition, the native stall boy attends to native trains arriving at Bloemfontein between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. on Mondays, with a view to ensuring that incoming passengers are able to obtain their requirements.

The native stall is personally supervised by the Local Manager on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays when native trains from the Transkei are being attended to by the stall attendants, in order to satisfy himself that passengers are receiving proper attention. In addition, the tea and coffee sold at the native stall are inspected by the Local Manager, who has found them to be correctly made and sweetened.

In the case of minerals cups are supplied on request or if a superior type of native is served.

In so far as the serving of meals and light refreshments from the kitchen, especially during meal times, is concerned, it would appear that the natives become impatient when they are told to wait until the Europeans have been served. This arrangement, whereby non-Europeans are served by European waitresses has on investigation been found to be unsatisfactory and it has, therefore, been decided to provide extra equipment and additional staff to permit of the service of refreshments direct from the native stall to the adjoining non-European waiting room. For this purpose the stallboy will be in attendance at the native stall from 6 a.m. with suitable breaks until 9 p.m. thereby obviating the necessity for non-Europeans to obtain their supplies from the refreshment room kitchen, as hitherto. It is considered these arrangements should meet the requirements of the better class non-Europeans.

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#### WAITING ROOM ACCOMMODATION

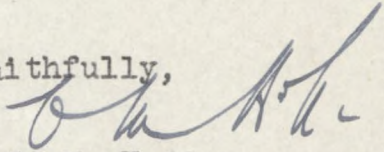
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#### SANITARY SERVICES

The lavatories for second class non-European passengers are, I am advised, situated next to the waiting room and are fitted with penny-in-the-slot locks. Provided a penny is put in the slot there should be no difficulty in obtaining access to these conveniences. Those for third class passengers are, however, not locked.

Any inconvenience which non-European passengers might have been caused at Bloemfontein station is regretted.

Yours faithfully,

  
for C. M. Hoffe,  
GENERAL MANAGER.

Seivain

123 APR 1942

Native School,  
P.O. Griquatown  
C.P.

21/4/42.

Dear Sir, I wish to call your attention to the most deplorable state of affairs on the Bloemfontein Railway Station in the Catering Department for Non Europeans.

As you are no doubt aware, Sir, Bloemfontein is the greatest and most important of all railway junctions for non-European passengers. As it is at Bloemfontein where railway lines from the Transkei, Basutoland, Natal, Transvaal and from all important native reserves converge; and some of these native passengers arriving at Bloemfontein on Saturday afternoon have to remain there until Monday morning as there are no Sunday trains on branch lines, like passengers going to Maseru, Basutoland and to certain parts of the Transkei e.g. Machelo etc.

Yet tea or coffee can only be bought -

21  
once a day before 8 o'clock in the morning  
at the Railway Coffe-stall for non -  
Europeans on the station. This tea or  
coffee is brought in a big jug which  
holds about ten or twelve cups. Passengers  
scramble for this tit-bit for it is a  
case of "first come first-served". When this  
jug is empty of its contents nothing more  
is procurable for the rest of that day.

This coffee or tea is always half black for  
want of milk and there is always  
very little sugar in it, as it is sweetened  
in the kitchen by the boy who sells it. Yet  
the sale price is 3<sup>d</sup> per cup. Native  
passengers who buy cool drinks are  
made to drink out of bottles though  
there are cups in the stall.

Thrice I was a member of a  
deputation which was sent to meet  
the Catering manager on the Station.  
This was in December 1940. We placed  
these facts before him and he called  
the boy in charge of the stall and  
spoke very strongly to him in our  
presence. Then he told us that as this

3  
boy has been working for the Railways  
for over 16 years it is not easy to  
dismiss him. We protested strongly against  
this ridiculous statement from one whose  
duty was to safeguard the interests  
of the travelling public and not to  
protect one who so conspicuously  
neglected his duties. In March, 1941 we  
again approached him, also in June  
and September, 1941. But instead of  
improving matters have gone worse for  
in some days the morning tea is very  
little.

The second - class non-European  
waiting room remains locked until late  
in the evening and many a line passenger  
have to shiver outside in the cold.  
In winter no fire is made and  
unless passengers go to the Jews in town  
to buy pieces of boxes to make fire  
no one cares for their comfort.

Sanitation is bad. The latrine for  
second class passengers has been  
locked for over 6 months now.  
Personally I have tried to go



to the kitchen to buy light refreshments  
or get full meal. But European girls  
in charge are abusive and ignore  
non-Europeans. Now I would like to  
know where non-European passengers  
must get their meal.

Please, Sir, I now most humbly  
beg to appeal to you to have these  
matters investigated and put right.  
The root of all these troubles in the  
stall is the boy who plays master over  
his people and who is no doubt  
encouraged by the fact that he  
cannot be transferred, dismissed  
or otherwise removed from the position  
he has so miserably failed to satisfy.

Please, Sir, take up this matter  
on behalf of natives as their father  
and mouthpiece

Thanking you again, Sir,

I remain

Sir,

Your obed. servant,  
Alexander Moshesh

24th April, 1942.

The General Manager,  
South African Railways and Harbours,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

Railway Facilities for Non-Europeans

I enclose herewith a letter I have received from one Alexander Moshesh, who is evidently an African schoolmaster at Griquatown.

I shall be grateful if you will send one of your officers (possibly one of those whom you have detailed off to protect the welfare of Non-European travellers on the Railways) to investigate the conditions described in the letter with a view to remedying them if they are found to be unfavourable.

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure: Letter - Please to return the letter  
when replying

JDRJ/ML.

6 MAY 1942

**SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS.—SUID-AFRIKAANSE SPOORWEE EN HAWENS.**

All communications to be addressed  
to the  
GENERAL MANAGER.

Alle mededelings moet aan die  
HOOFBESTUURDER  
gerig word.

Telegrams/Telegramme } SAR.  
Cables/Kabelgramme }

Phone: Railway Exchange.  
Telefoon: Spoorwegsentrale.

I.T.

In your reply please quote

G.2/401

Geliewe in u antwoord aan te haal.

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE,  
HOOFBESTUURDERSKANTOOR,

JOHANNESBURG,

4th May, 1942.

Senator J. D. Rheinalt-Jones,  
P. O. Box 97,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 24th ultimo and enclosure, in connection with certain matters relating to catering and sanitary services for non-Europeans at Bloemfontein station, I have to state that the points raised by your correspondent are being fully investigated and a further communication will be addressed to you when my enquiries have been completed.

Yours faithfully,

for C. M. Hoffe,  
GENERAL MANAGER.

24th April, 1942.

Mr. Alexander Moshesh,  
Native School,  
P.O. GRIQUATOWN,  
Cape Province.

Dear Sir,

Travelling Facilities for Non-Europeans

I have received your letter of the 21st instant, and I am distressed by the account you give of the conditions which the Non-European public have to suffer on the Bloemfontein Station. I am writing at once to the General Manager of Railways to ask him to have a special officer from Headquarters sent there to investigate and to have matters put right. I will write to you in due course.

Yours faithfully,

JDRJ/ML.

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